



# Lincoln University

## ENGLISH 75 COURSE SYLLABUS

SPRING 2021

**Course Title:** Critical Thinking  
**Course Number:** English 75  
**Class schedule:** Tuesdays 3:30 - 6:15  
**Course pre-/co-requisites:** None  
**Credit:** 3 units / 45 lecture hours)  
**Level:** Introductory (I)

**Instructor:** Dr. Sylvia Y. Schoemaker Rippel  
**University instructor email:** [sysr@lincolnuca.edu](mailto:sysr@lincolnuca.edu)  
**Course-related email:** [profsylvia@gmail.com](mailto:profsylvia@gmail.com)  
**Syllabus Last Revised:** 1/2021

*Course blog and other content to be announced in class.*

### Course Description

Consideration of cognitive skills and communicative strategies for defining, applying, analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating information. Course includes structural and operational approaches to task/mission analysis, decision-making, change forecasting, adaptation, and evaluation. System approach to analysis and solution of complex problems. Conceptual issues in problem definition, goal determination and measurement of effectiveness.

### Educational Objectives

Skills emphasized include ability to examine objectively various sides of issues and to effectively use the procedures involved in systematic problem solving. Additional skills targeted include increased ability to develop and apply academic and professional communication skills, including improved ability to interact appropriately with challenging materials at an increased level of communicative competence.

## Course Learning Outcomes<sup>1</sup>

	<b>Student Learning Outcomes</b> Successful students are able to:	<b>Program Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Institutional Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Assessment Activities</b> As demonstrated by successful completion of or participation in:
1	Demonstrate acquisition of comprehensive cognitive skills and communicative strategies for defining, applying, analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating information.	PLO 1	ILO 1a, ILO 7a	Assigned reading responses and reflections; class presentations and discussions, quizzes, tests
2	Demonstrate ability to apply learning to academic and real-world critical and creative thinking, including applying a systematic approach to analysis and solution of complex problems and the use of structural and operational approaches to task/mission analysis, decision-making, change forecasting, adaptation, and evaluation.	PLO 1	ILO 1a, ILO 7a	Assigned exercises (homework and in class); presentations, quizzes, tests
3	Demonstrate ability to attain and apply an increased level of critical skills and communicative competence for significant personal, academic, and professional purposes; examine objectively various sides of issues and demonstrate ability to overcome obstacles to critical thinking	PLO 3	ILO 2a, ILO 6a	Class discussions, oral and written individual and team presentations,
4	Demonstrate appropriate and accurate application of critical and creative thinking theory, including problem-solving, analysis, and decision-making criteria in approaching and solving text, classroom, and real-world problems, individually and as group participants.	PLO 4	ILO 1a	Assigned exercises (homework and in class); presentations, quizzes, tests
5	Demonstrate ability to interact appropriately with challenging materials with clear observation skills, accurate separation of fact from opinion, and enhanced ability to draw appropriate inferences from relevant	PLO 5	ILO 3a, ILO 4a	Weekly assigned reading and course unit responses and class presentations and discussions, quizzes, tests

	reasoning and evaluation skills to issues of belief, morality, and law.			
6	Demonstrate critical and creative thinking with applications in communication in real world personal, professional, and academic contexts.	PLO 5	ILO 3a, ILO 4a	Class discussions, oral and written individual and team presentations, class discussions, exercises, midterm and final examinations

<sup>1</sup> Detailed description of learning outcomes and information about the assessment procedure are available at the [Center for Teaching and Learning](http://ctl.lincolnuca.edu) website (ctl.lincolnuca.edu).

## Instructional Materials and References

### Required Texts:

Mayfield, M. (2014). *Thinking for yourself*. (9th Ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning: Wadsworth. (TFY) ISBN 978-1133311188

Vaughn, L. (2015). *The power of critical thinking: Effective reasoning about ordinary and extraordinary claims* (5th Ed.). New York: Oxford University Press. (TPCT) ISBN 9780199385423

### Companion Sites

Thinking for Yourself Site

The Power of Critical Thinking

### Instructional Methods

This is a direct classroom instruction course.

The course sessions will include lectures, A/V-augmented presentations (text-based and other topically related slides and relevant audio/video/web resources), written and oral classroom exercises applying course concepts, small group and classroom discussions, student presentations of individual and group assignments based on course units, with emphasis on engaging students in learning by doing.

Assignments and projects require students to actively use resources of the library. Detailed guides to *library resources* as well as the description of Lincoln University approach to *information literacy* are available at the [Center for Teaching and Learning](http://ctl.lincolnuca.edu) website (ctl.lincolnuca.edu).

### Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to consistently attend class punctually and fully (arriving on time and leaving the classroom only at the scheduled break and end times). Successful students participate in individual and group work in a productive manner, prepare and perform well on tests, complete assignments according to schedule and at a level appropriate to university rubrics, and take personal responsibility for meeting the objectives of the course.

### Topical Outline

Topics covered are factors in critical and creative thinking including observation skills, appropriate language skills and encoding strategies, differentiating among fact, inference, judgment, recognizing

fallacies of reasoning and evaluation, understanding viewpoint, analyzing character, logic, and emotion in persuasion.

## Homework Assignments

For each of the units outlined on the syllabus (as well as additional assignments given in class), students will do the following by the date listed on the schedule below: For midterm and final review assignments, students will present a review ePortfolios/PPTs adapted from the weekly assignments as individual or team projects.

Read assigned materials with care and understanding.

Respond to the main points of each chapter assigned by listing three or four key questions with answers (no more than two or three sentences each).

Reflect on the unit in writing (a brief paragraph or two).

Email your unit and chapter assignments to me at [profsylvia@gmail.com](mailto:profsylvia@gmail.com), before the date on the schedule.

## Course Schedule

#	Date	Unit	HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS Thinking for Yourself (TFY) The Power of Critical Thinking (TPCT)
1	2/2/2021	Introduction	TPCT Ch. 1: The Power of Critical Thinking Where Do You Stand?
2	2/9/2021	Observation	TFY C1, Observation Skills: What's Out There? TPCT Ch. 2: Obstacles to Critical Thinking
3	2/16/2021	Language and Thought	TFY C2, Word Precision: How Do I Describe It?
4	2/23/2021	Facts	TFY C3 Facts: What's Real?
5	3/2/2021	Inferences	TFY C4, Inferences: What Follows? TPCT Ch. 9: Inference to the Best Explanation
6	3/9/2021	Assumptions	TFY C5, Assumptions: What's Taken for Granted? TPCT Ch. 4: Reasons for Belief and Doubt TPCT Ch. 5: Fallacies and Persuaders
7	3/16/2021	Opinions	TFY C6. Opinions: What's Believed? TPCT Ch. 11: Critical Thinking in Morality and Law Review; ePortfolio 1
8	3/23/2021	Midterm	

9	3/30/2021	Points of View	TFY C7, Viewpoints: What's the Filter? PCT C10, Judging Scientific Theories
10	4/6/2021	Argument	TFY C8, Argument: What's a Good Argument?
11	4/13/2021	Fallacies	TFY C9, Fallacies: What's a Faulty Argument?
12	4/20/2021	Induction	TFY C10, Inductive Reasoning: How do I Reason from Evidence? PCT C8 Inductive Reasoning
13	4/27/2021	Inductive Fallacies	TFY C11, Inductive Fallacies: How Can Inductive Reasoning Go Wrong?
14	5/4/2021	Deductive Reasoning Review E-Portfolio/Ppt 2 Presentations	TFY C12, Deductive Reasoning: How Do I Reason from Premises?
15	5/11/2021	Final	

**Revisions to the schedule will be announced in class as needed.**

### **Assessment Criteria & Method of Evaluating Students**

Evaluation will include exercises, daily assignments (oral and written), review ePortfolios of homework and expansions for midterm and final reviews, and midterm and final examinations.

**Grading Guidelines**

Students will demonstrate their level of achievement through appropriate and accurate application of critical thinking theory, including problem-solving, analysis, and decision-making criteria in approaching and solving text, classroom, and real-world exercises, individually and as group participants.

The distributions are indicated in the tables below.

Items	Points
Exercises/ Daily Assignments, Oral and Written	20
Midterm	25
Review ePortfolio/PPt I, II	10
Presentation of Assignments	10
Final Exam	35
Total	100

Points	Grade
100-95	A
94-90	A-
89-87	B+
86-84	B
83-80	B-
79-77	C+
76-74	C
73-70	C-
69-65	D+
64-60	D
59 or less	F

**Please Note:**

Class attendance is required. Required textbooks must be obtained as soon as possible and brought to class for each session. Class participation is necessary for enhanced learning through applied content, group interactions, and individual and small group presentations.

Plagiarized content is strictly prohibited: Researched materials must be documented using a consistent style for both in-text and end-text citations of sources using the published standards of the most recent subject-appropriate style guide, such as APA (social sciences) or MLA (humanities), for example.

Electronics are not allowed during exams. Cell phones should not be active during class sessions

Missed exams and assignments require certified excuses (signed documentation by an appropriate medical or other official representative). With documentation, a makeup exam may be scheduled